From: Nels Christian Hansen
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/27/02 11:31pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I'd like to begin with a recommendation: have some techies find out where each comment came from originally and throw out the 5 trillion or so that come from the microsoft domain. If you don't think they'd try to pull something like that, I refer you to
http://news.zdnet.co.uk/story/0,,t269-s2102244,00.html
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I believe that the corporate culture at Microsoft has been and shall continue to be one which flaunts its monopoly power over the world, and some slap on the wrist will do nothing important. I'm not sure which particular alternative solution would be best, but the damage they have done to the software industry as a while in the past several years has been astonishing. As a result of their anticompetitive business practices, an excellent company (Netscape) and its product were brought to financial ruin, software prices have risen at a rate far greater than inflation to the point where a simple operating system and office suite, microsoft windows and microsoft office, cost nearly as much as 2 entire computers. Additionalliy, they continually 'upgrade' their office suite for no purpose other than to force everyone to pay them extra money and they design their product to not be fully compatible with previous versions so that as soon as one person purchases it, everyone is forced to. I would praise microsoft for its development and implementation of new technologies at a rapid rate into their operating system, but at the same time they don't seem to have any respect for the concerns of us consumers regarding security, oftentimes implementing new technologies without sufficient testing, leaving systems vulnerable to security exploits. And then, when you download the patches (and they refuse sometimes to explain what the patches fix), new problems are introduced to a system which was perfectly fine. And they can get away with it because they have no competition. They are price gouging and under-innovating. Some competition needs to be introduced somehow. One interesting proposal I heard was break Microsoft into 3 companies all of which have rights to all of Microsofts products (windows, office, IE), and then allow the free market to reduce prices to a reasonable level, and then whichever is the most innovative for the least cost will triumph, whereas under the current system every time microsoft releases a new anything it triumphes, even if it is worse than the prior product (for example, windows ME, which crashed my computer so much more than windows 98 that I uninstalled it and put 98 back on). Something drastic must be done - or else everyone will be forced to learn some archaic operating system like linux simply because they can't afford the 10 trillion dollars microsoft is charging per copy of Windows.
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